



(A Charitable Incorporated Organisation)

Charity number 1161284

Trustee Report and Financial Statements
Year ending 31 March 2024

New Note Projects
Concorde House
18 Margaret Street
Brighton
BN2 1TS

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a large, stylized 'J' followed by a horizontal line and a small flourish.

Reviewed and approved by Julia Handelman-Smith, Chair and Trustee, 12 December 2024

The Trustees of New Note Projects present their Annual Report for the period from 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024.

1. Governance and Structure

New Note Projects (NNP) is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO). Our constitution is a 'Foundation' model whose only voting members are its charity trustees. New Note Projects was constituted on 14 April 2015 when the Charity Commission produced a unique charitable number: 1161284.

The Trustees have had regard to the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit when considering the activities to be undertaken. These are detailed in this report.

New Note Projects was overseen by three trustees during the period 1 April 2023 - 31 March 2024:

Interim Chairperson: Helen Marsden
Trustee: Dan Blomfield
Trustee: Sarah Erskine
Trustee: David Martin

Dan Blomfield and Helen Marsden resigned from the board of trustees on 15 December 2023. The board then advertised for a new chair and another board member.

The day-to-day operations of New Note Projects were overseen by Founder and Chief Executive Molly Mathieson.

2. New Note Projects aims and objectives

New Note is a charity based in Brighton which uses music to support people affected by addiction and its supplementary issues such as challenging mental health, isolation, and poverty. Over 70% of our participants have experienced homelessness.

New Note was launched by Molly Mathieson in 2015 due to the drug and alcohol issues within Brighton and Hove, which had the gruesome label of being the drugs death capital of the UK.

New Note runs four projects for vulnerable adults. These are:

- The multi-award-winning New Note Orchestra: the first recovery orchestra in the world.
- New Note Strummers: a weekly guitar group for adults affected by addiction.
- New Note Dance: a new group designed to support mainly vulnerable women. The facilitator is an ex-musician from New Note Orchestra.
- New Note Key Changers: a brand-new leadership programme. We train up people affected by addiction to become community music workshop leaders.

Across all our groups we have some guiding principles which help our participants to strengthen their recoveries from addiction. They are:

- Offer safe spaces where people feel part of a creative community.
- Support to build confidence and challenge negative self-assumptions.
- Develop new skills.
- Raise awareness around behaviours.
- Encourage sober friendships, form new community links, and advocate volunteering.
- Instill purpose and direction.
- Produce life-defining creative opportunities through learning and performance.

Anyone affected by addiction can access our groups, regardless of ability. We have created referral pathways with all of the statutory drugs/alcohol/homeless services in the city. Our groups are free to attend.

Since our launch we have become nationally recognised as an exemplary model of how to sustain recovery from addiction. We are experts at engaging vulnerable adults using improvisation and co-creation, building trust and a sense of belonging by removing barriers and creating opportunities for participation and involvement in high quality music-making and performance. Our methodologies have been recognised by the government after being cited as an ideal recovery model by the Centre for Social Justice (*Road to Recovery. Addiction in our Society - the Case for Reform*. 2019). Alongside this, we have won multiple awards including the prestigious Kings Award for Voluntary Service – a lifetime MBE for charities.

Trustees Report accounting Period - 2023-2024

Some highlights for this period include:

Growth: We increased our reach to serve a total of 357 individuals.

Partnerships: We formed collaborations with other organisations including, Create Recovery, Fallen Angels Dance Theatre, and the Royal Opera House.

Recognition: We received the King's Award for Voluntary Service, an MBE for charities which is a prestigious honour recognising our contributions.

Programme Expansion: We launched New Note Dance and expanded our Key Changers leadership program.

This accounting period featured great successes alongside serious external challenges which included the cost of living crisis, reduced funding in the arts sector and toxic debates within the 'culture wars'.

Research commissioned by Equity and carried out by the Autonomy Institute shows that overall arts funding for the UK from national bodies (Arts Council England, Arts Council of Northern Ireland, Arts Council of Wales and Creative Scotland) has been cut by 16% in real terms since 2017.

Alongside these very challenging external factors, New Note Projects doubled its engagement with people affected by addiction and challenging mental health. This was due to the launch of New Note Dance and the development of our pilot programme Key Changers.

On the 14th November New Note Orchestra was selected to receive The King's Award for Voluntary Service in 2023. This is a lifetime award and is the equivalent of an MBE for charities.

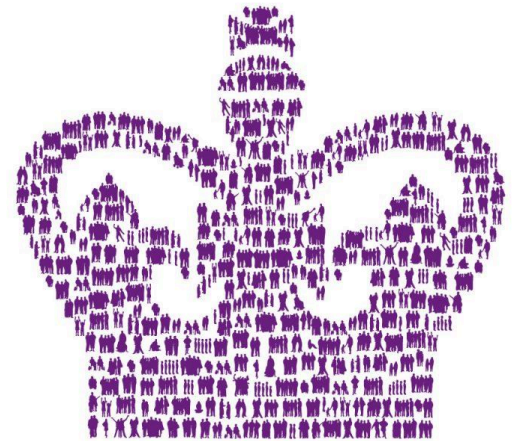
This period also saw New Note Projects enter into creative and financial partnerships with a range of different organisations.

We entered into a financial partnership with Create Recovery, who agreed to finance 50% of New Note Dance.

We entered into a creative partnership with Fallen Angels Dance Theatre and the Royal Opera House. Please see more information in the sections below.

For this report there are five key sections:

- New Note Orchestra (*See section 3*)
- New Note Strummers (*See section 4*)
- New Note Key Changers (*See section 5*)
- New Note Dance (*See section 6*)
- Review of Financial Position. Income and Expenditure (*See section 7*)



The King's Award for Voluntary Service

The MBE for volunteer groups

PUTTING OUR AIMS AND OBJECTIVES INTO PRACTICE

Quantitative Evaluation

Registers are taken at every session for each project which allows us to measure our reach and monitor engagement with our participants.

The following measures are used:

Workshop sessions - the number of sessions held within the financial year.

People attending sessions - the number of unique participants attending at least one session within the financial year. This measures our total reach.

Overall attendances - number of sessions multiplied by the number of participants at each session. This allows us to monitor engagement by comparing with previous years.

Retention rate - the number of unique individuals who attended at least one session in the previous financial year, and returned for at least one session in the current year. For example, if 22 people attended in 2022/23, and 16 of them returned in 2023/24, this gives a retention rate of 73% (16/22). This allows us to monitor participant's long term engagement with a project.

Performances - the number of live performances given in the financial year.

Qualitative Evaluations.

We often ask the participants to fill out feedback forms and questionnaires, to ask about how the sessions are helping with their recovery journeys and the development of musical skills. Alongside this, we gain informal feedback at every session. A summary of the formal qualitative data is included in the relevant sections.

3. Operations summary - New Note Orchestra (NNO)

What	How many <i>(3-year average in brackets)</i>
NNO Workshop sessions	46 (46)
People attending the workshops	29 (23)
Overall attendances	445 (473)
Retention rate	73% (71%)
Performances	5

NNO was launched in 2015 as the first of its kind in the world. Its aims are:

- To help people in recovery from drug and alcohol addiction to stay sober by meeting regularly to compose and play music.
- To reduce the stigma around alcoholism and addiction in our communities by putting on public performances.
- To produce new and original music of high artistic value.

NNO performed five concerts across the UK:

- 1) Brighton Fringe/Caravanserai in partnership with Hullabaloo Quire.
- 2) South East Dance, Brighton.
- 3) Storyhouse, Chester.
- 4) The Royal Opera House, London - full performance.
- 5) The Royal Opera House, London - Insights conference.

Significant achievements during the period of this report

The first concert for this reporting period was in May 2023 and as part of a partnership between NNO, Brighton Fringe and Hullabaloo Quire. NNO were invited to take part in the Fringe's landmark stage, Caravanserai. Artistic Director of Hullabaloo Quire, Kirsty Martin, wrote some lyrics to NNO's music. It was a successful collaboration and resulted in a sell-out show.



In September 2022, Molly Mathieson approached Fallen Angels Dance Theatre (FADT) and proposed that they collaborate to make a 10-minute piece for the [Addiction Recovery Arts Network](#) conference at the University of West London. This then kick-started a year-long collaboration process between these two leading recovery arts organisations.

The conference was a landmark moment which brought together other recovery arts organisations and led to FADT and NNO creating a brand new show called 'Traces Through Time'. Inspired by the 'recovery journeys' of the participants in both organisations, 'Traces Through Time' was developed in both Brighton and Chester and culminated in three performances including one at the Royal Opera House in London.

'Traces Through Time' was ambitious in scale and reach, and from the beginning had some logistical challenges, which included the two organisations being separated by over 200 miles.

The collaboration began through a series of Zoom meetings with participants and weekly one-to-ones with the creative team which included Claire Morris and Paul Bayes Kitcher from FADT and Molly Mathieson and Conall Gleeson from NNO. In July 2023, dancers from FADT travelled to Brighton to work together with the musicians from NNO in a series of workshops, to weave all the different segments together. After three days, a 45-minute performance was shown to the public at South East Dance in Brighton.

In November the musicians from NNO headed to Chester to perform with FADT at Storyhouse and then four days later the artists performed at The Royal Opera House in London.



NNO and FADT also held a conference, a panel discussion chaired by Dr Cathy Sloan, as part of the Royal Opera House Insights season highlighting our work transforming lives through music, dance and creativity to support artists in mental health and addiction recovery. The conference was filmed and has been viewed over 7000 times.

We asked audiences attending Traces Through Time whether they had seen FADT or NNO before?

DATE	NO	YES
01/11/2023 - Storyhouse	61%	39%
04/11/2023 - Royal Opera House	85%	15%
05/11/2023 - Insights Conference at ROH	78%	22%
TOTAL	70%	30%

This shows how we reached new audiences through collaboration with external partners.

Feedback from the New Note Orchestra Musicians:

Overall, people were very happy with the experience, people scored their enjoyment 9 out of 10.

People felt proud of the **performance**, saying it was ‘amazing’, ‘brilliant’, ‘fantastic’, and ‘excellent’, and noting the amazing reaction we got from the audience. Some said the music, sound, and staging was excellent, but others felt they needed more space on stage, more time to soundcheck properly, and more time to focus on individual elements of the performance such as the spoken word. There were many comments about the whole experience being rewarding, but also very tiring. The busy schedule meant there wasn’t much time to stop and think, and people were often in a rush to finish meals or travel between hotels and venues.

What did the musicians gain from the experience?

People said they gained confidence in themselves, their social skills, and their ability to perform. It made them realise what the orchestra is capable of and provided an opportunity to get out of their comfort zone and overcome personal challenges. People also gained a sense of connection and community; they were grateful for the new opportunities and experiences, including being able to perform in large venues, and some related that to being possible because of their sobriety. The experience also reinforced their appreciation of the orchestra and their fellow musicians.

4. Operations summary - New Note Strummers

What	How many (3-year average in brackets)
Strummers workshop sessions	43 (43)
People attending the workshops	36 (28)
Overall attendances	348 (301)
Retention rate	67% (60%)
Performances	0

New Note Strummers was launched in January 2017 and has been the cornerstone for many people seeking solace in the recovery community. It is a drop-in group with predominantly men aged between 35-60. This group is designed to support people in the early stages of their recovery journey.

This group continued to offer a safe place for some of the most vulnerable people within Brighton and Hove. This accounting period saw the New Note Strummers support some of the participants in stepping up to facilitate the group. This was a valuable step in their progression.

No public facing concerts were held during this period as many of the participants were dealing with challenging issues including acute anxiety.

5. Operations summary - New Note Key Changers

What	How many
Workshop sessions	41
People attending the workshops	109
Overall attendances	257
Retention rate	N/A

In 2021, a co-created strategy with the New Note Orchestra musicians identified a need to create an 'intervention' team who would engage people in the early stages of recovery or still in active addiction. The Key Changers Programme addresses this need by training up and supporting musicians with lived experience of addiction and other adverse life challenges as community music leaders. During the period of this report, three New Note Orchestra musicians were supported and trained as community music leaders. They facilitated a series of workshops in rehab centres and homeless hostels, engaging a wide variety of vulnerable people and offering conversations around recovery from addiction. We continued to pilot the programme by creating a network of other music organisations in Brighton, where we shared resources and learning methods around music facilitation. The network continues to support our Key Changers' development.

The Key Changers deliver music workshops in partnership with homeless hostels and rehab centres. During this period we entered into a partnership with Crawley Open House who support people affected by homelessness. Malcolm Nicholas, Service Manager at Crawley Open House says, "New Note facilitates music workshops for our clients, and it enables clients that may not be so confident in other forms of expression such as talking or writing to form positive social connections centred around a common love for music. The beauty about the music workshops is that you do not have to be proficient in your ability to make music but by the end of the session clients end up jamming together."

The benefits for music workshop participants include:

- A therapeutic and creative outlet which helps them cope with challenges
- Social connections where they bond through a shared love of music, reducing feelings of isolation and loneliness.
- Improved self-confidence through participation and engagement.
- Increased positive mental and emotional well-being.
- Opportunities to learn both musical and social skills.
- The groups are open to anyone and can be accessed by clients who do not have musical skills.

We have plans to expand this programme due to its success.

6. Operations summary - New Note Dance

What	How many
Workshop sessions	40
People attending the workshops	33
Overall attendances	396
Retention rate	N/A - this is the first year for New Note Dance.
Performances	1

New Note Dance was launched in March 2023. This weekly movement workshop in central Brighton engages women overcoming addiction, mental health adversity, trauma and poverty. Workshops are led by local recovery champion Lauren Dowse, who founded the group in 2023 after accessing music-making sessions with New Note Orchestra.

Lauren wanted to use her expertise in recovery and the Tamalpa Process to create a unique space for women in recovery to enjoy mindful, creative movement as a unique group experience and New Note wanted to support her in her creative practice of becoming a full time dance facilitator.

In Brighton & Hove, women can expect to live 25% of their life in poor health (significantly worse than the average for England). Over one in five local adults aged 20+ have two or more long-term health conditions and 8% have at least one physical/mental condition, strongly correlated with deprivation (Brighton & Hove Health & Wellbeing Strategy 2019-30).

Since its launch in 2023, New Note Dance has successfully engaged women with known barriers to physical activity - and particularly long-term mental health conditions including depression and substance use disorder. More than half of women engaged in the past year also had additional barriers (notably low incomes, unpaid caring roles, and physical health conditions/disabilities). Around two-thirds of women were aged 55 or over, and two members of the group (including the facilitator) have lived experience of homelessness.

Overall, the women New Note Dance engages are diverse - but all vulnerable in at least one aspect of their lives. In developing New Note Dance, facilitator Lauren has consistently (though not always intentionally) applied best practice approaches for successfully engaging underserved groups. For example, as a local recovery champion, she has engaged community peers as participants/volunteers and promoters of New Note Dance at local recovery meetings/events.

Lauren has also used distinctive facilitation techniques (emphasising a whole-group experience where everyone feels valued) alongside thoughtful branding emphasising creativity (over potentially off-putting sports/fitness themes). This has helped the group achieve steady growth in reach/attendance and excellent feedback from participants.

Independent evaluation of our pilot work in late 2023 found that whilst none of the participants surveyed had specifically signed up to improve their physical wellbeing, 75% reported this was a major benefit. Similar (unintentional) outcomes included increased physical activity (88% of participants), improved mental wellbeing (71%), increased connection to the community (100%) and healthier lifestyle choices (90%).

7. Review of financial position

The New Note Projects accounts are independently examined by registered accountant Chris Tyler FCA, DChA, FCIE.

New Note Project accounts for 1st April 2023-31st March 2024.

	2024 TOTAL	2024 UNRESTRICTED	2024 RESTRICTED	2023 TOTAL
INCOME				
<u>GRANTS</u>				
LOTTERY	9,970	-	9,970	9,930
ARTS COUNCIL	51,601	-	51,601	37,800
CHALK CLIFF TRUST	-	-	-	4,500
POSTCODE LOTTERY	13,355	-	13,355	8,011
ERNEST KLEINWORT	-	-	-	3,000
CALYPSO BROWNING TRUST	-	-	-	1,000
GARFIELD WESTON	-	-	-	10,000
SPORT ENGLAND	-	-	-	9,950
CREATE RECOVERY	1,330	1,330	-	-
SUSSEX COMMUNITY FOUNDATION	-	-	-	8,049
FOYLE FOUNDATION	-	-	-	-
LEIGH TRUST	2,500	-	2,500	2,500
MARTIN GEDDES TRUST	4,000	-	4,000	-
CRAWLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL	1,000	-	1,000	-
SUTTON PLACE FOUNDATION	2,500	-	2,500	-
FALLEN ANGELS - TRAVEL COSTS	1,292	1,292	-	-
<u>DONATIONS</u>				
DONATIONS	8,882	8,882	-	2,254
<u>OTHER INCOME</u>				
TICKETS	4,257	4,257	-	4,472
FEE	350	350	-	-
REFUNDS	26	26	-	542
	101,063	16,137	84,926	102,008

EXPENDITURE

STAFF COSTS	64,855	1,244	63,611	58,836
OPERATING COSTS	29,762	14,251	15,511	17,952
INVESTMENTS	6,183	4,027	2,156	6,699

	100,800	19,522	81,278	83,487
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NET INCOME/(EXPENDITURE)	263	-3,385	3,648	18,521
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TRANSFERS	-	-	-	-
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FUND BALANCES B/FWD	41,056	23,057	17,999	22,535
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FUND BALANCES C/FWD	41,319	19,672	21,647	41,056
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BANK BALANCES	41,319	19,672	21,647	41,056
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RESTRICTED FUND BALANCE

LOTTERY GROUP - STRUMMERS	9,970
SUTTON PLACE FOUNDATION	2,500
POSTCODE LOTTERY	6,677
LEIGH TRUST	2,500

21,647

Reserves policy:

Our reserves policy is to hold sufficient funds to source the core operating capacity of the charity for four months. This means the charity can meet ongoing liabilities, sufficient to ensure that all delivery commitments can be met and to protect the long-term future of the operations. Our unrestricted reserves on 31 March 2024 were £19,672

Assets:

The charity has assets in the form of musical instruments. Our total assets on 31 March 2024 were £15,000

INDEPENDENT EXAMINERS' REPORT TO THE TRUSTEES ON THE UNAUDITED ACCOUNTS OF NEW NOTE PROJECTS

I report to the charity trustees on my examination of the accounts of New Note Projects for the year ended 31 March 2024.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the charity trustees of the Trust you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ('the Act').

I report in respect of my examination of the Trust's accounts carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act and in carrying out my examination I have followed all applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

Independent examiner's statement

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination giving me cause to believe that in any material respect:

1. accounting records were not kept in respect of the Trust as required by section 130 of the Act; or
2. the accounts do not accord with those records; or

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.



C R Tyler FCA DChA FCIE
F1 CRT Limited
Chartered Accountant
Flat 24, Wellingtonia Court
Laine Close
Brighton
BN1 6TD
Date: 13th December 2024